

2018 Kershaw Lake District Cartref CY96

RANGE: Deconstructed

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Chardonnay made from Dijon clone CY96.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Lake District, Elgin, Western Cape, South Africa.

SOIL: Cartref, of granitic origin with Quartz.

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 1024 kg selected from a registered single vineyard site.

OVERVIEW: The inspiration for these 3 Deconstructed Chardonnays stems from my belief that the Elgin region boasts credentials that make it world-class. To bolster these regional credentials, I have set out to prove that Elgin has both signature grapes, as well as specific 'terroirs' (meso-climates) that reflect intra-regional distinctions. To fully comprehend this, it is necessary to dig deeper into the DNA that make up our region. To elucidate this, I have decided to make these 3 Chardonnay wines that have each been selected from a specific vineyard and an individual clone. Importantly, this is an ongoing story that will unfold over the coming years.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 15th March 2018
Brix at Harvest: 22.8

SEASON: The trend of below average winter-rainfall which begun in the winter of 2015 persisted in the winter of 2017. Thus, soils were drier and cover crops less established as the 2018 season began. However, this must be seen in the context of Elgin, one of the most reliable areas with regards rainfall and the storage thereof. Despite a reduction in rain, Elgin was still a lot better off than the rest of the South African wine areas. What did cause a reduction in our seasonal yield was wet, cool and windy weather during flowering. Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are especially sensitive to a poor flowering environment and crop loads in some of the Chardonnay were down to a measly 18 hl/ha. During the vegetative period, there were some warm days but no damaging heatwaves and on average the growing season was cooler resulting in smaller bunch sizes and decent acidities. As an upside of the lower yield, the smaller berries promised high flavour intensity and good colour for the reds. In what seems to have become a trend, we again experienced sporadic showers during the growing season, providing some relief in terms of water, vapour pressure deficit and temperature. There were however reports of hail damage from some parts of the valley. The cooler weather meant slower ripening, and this allowed the vines to accumulate the important secondary metabolites that are the hallmark of noble cultivars interacting with well-matched terroir.

WINEMAKING: Grapes were hand-picked on an early autumnal morning, placed into small lug baskets and tipped directly into a press before being gently whole-bunch pressed up to a maximum of 0.6 bar or until a low juice recovery of 615 litres per ton was obtained using our new Willmes Sigma 5 Press. The juice gravity-flowed directly to barrel (no pumps were used at all) without settling. The unclarified juice had no enzymes or yeast added to it and therefore underwent spontaneous fermentation until dry, with malolactic discouraged. The wine rested in barrel for 4 months prior to judicious sulphuring and a further 7 months' maturation in barrel before racking and bottling.

BARREL SELECTION: A small number of artisanal coopers were selected, all from Burgundy and only French oak was chosen. Importantly, this wine was micro vinified as a separate batch. Over the years we have developed an algorithm to ascertain which coopers work best and how many new and used barrels are utilised. In 2018, 52.5% was new oak; 100% using 228 litre barrels.

ALCOHOL: 13.69%

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 780 bottles and 30 magnums were produced.

TASTING PROFILE: Sourced from the western part of Elgin, known as the Lake District, this clone produces wines that are nervous, aromatic, elegant and crisp with slightly lower alcohol and finely balanced, the fruit profile being subtle with hints of citrus/orange peel and peach blossom and with time, some nutty elements. The Cartref soils, a mixture of decomposed granite, pebbles and quartz, add delicacy and heighten the fruit intensity.



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